

REMARKS/ARGUMENT

Claims 26-36 were in the application. Claims 26 and 27 have been amended providing further limitation as to the location of the first wire section wire (claim 26) and the first and second wire section wires (claim 27) being above the first belt. Claim 37 has been added, indicating the direction of motion of the first wire section wire 22 being the same direction as that of the belt 6 and through the combining section, i.e. both move to the left in Fig. 1.

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowability of claims 28, 29, 34, 35 and 36. Claim 38 is claim 28 in its original form before the amendments herein, combining the previous versions of claims 26 and 27 with claim 28.

Claims 39-42 are all dependent upon new claim 38 (old claim 28) and repeat the limitations of allowable claims 29, 34, 35 and 36, respectively. With the indication of allowability of claim 28, claims 38-42 should be allowable for the same reason.

Claims 26 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over Kunihiisa. Reconsideration is requested. In Kunihiisa, each in the series of wire sections that apply addition plies of fiber suspension to previous layers are all located beneath the felt belt, not above it. In applicants' claim 26, as amended, the wires that apply the additional fiber suspension layer are above the felt belt not beneath it. Locating the wires beneath the felt belt, rather than above it, makes web transfer and combining at a combining section more difficult in that gravity must be overcome. This further requires an adequate suction type couch roll. It is submitted that moving the wire section wire from below to above in the first belt is an unobvious change not suggested by Kunihiisa.

Claims 26, 27 and 30-33 were rejected over 35 U.S.C. § 102 to Watanabe. Reconsideration is requested. With reference to Fig. 3 of Watanabe, the right hand twin wire arrangement B, a first ply is formed between the wires 2 and 3 and is deposited on the belt 17 which advances to the right. The belt 17 had previously received a formed web from the left hand arrangement A. While this structure has some analogy to applicants' Fig. 1, the forming wire or the wire in Watanabe that receives the suspension is suggested to be downstream of the combining section roll 6, that is to the right in Fig. 3, which causes the suspension first applied there to be above the double plies and creates the danger that some of the suspension will drip on

the double plies. In applicants' process, in contrast, the suspension is applied to the first wire section wire upstream of the combining section avoiding the foregoing danger.

For these reasons, applicants' arrangement of claim 26, amended and the other rejected claims dependent thereupon are distinguishable from Watanabe and allowable thereover.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims now in the application are allowable and their allowance is requested.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Asst. Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on February 28, 2002:

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Name of applicant, assignee or
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Signature

February 28, 2002

Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,

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